

TITLE 14. Fish and Game Commission Notice of Proposed Changes in Regulations

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Fish and Game Commission (Commission), pursuant to the authority vested by sections 200, 202, 205, 215 and 220 of the Fish and Game Code and to implement, interpret or make specific sections 200, 205, 215, 2930, 2931 and 2932 of said Code, proposes to amend sections 4.15 and 5.25, and add Section 5.26, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, relating to Salton Sea sport fishing regulations.

Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview

Currently sport fisheries in the Salton Sea (Imperial County) include: Gulf croaker (*Bairdiella icistia*), orangemouth corvina (*Cynoscion xanthulus*), and sargo (*Anisotremus davidsoni*). Current sport fishing regulations for the Salton Sea include a daily bag limit of five corvina, with an 18-inch minimum size limit, and no daily bag or size limits for croaker and sargo.

Because of declining populations of corvina, croaker and sargo, the Department is proposing to limit the sport harvest of corvina to two per day, and limit the harvest of croaker and sargo to six of each species per day. Possession limits for all species are proposed to include two daily bag limits. The proposed action is requested to prevent significant sport harvest from jeopardizing current and planned restoration activities for the Salton Sea and its sport fisheries while continuing to provide angling opportunities.

Additionally, to further reduce harvest impacts on immature croaker (*Bairdiella*) and sargo populations in the Salton Sea, the Department is proposing to eliminate the use of these species for bait purposes within the Colorado River Fishing District.

A minor change is proposed to be made to subsection (c) of Section 4.15 for clarity.

NOTICE IS ALSO GIVEN that any person interested may present statements, orally or in writing, relevant to this action at a hearing to be held in the Veterans Memorial Building, 209 Surf Street, Morro Bay, California, on Friday, August 27, 2004, at 8:30 a.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard. It is requested, but not required, that written comments be submitted on or before August 23, 2004 at the address given below, or by fax at (916) 653-5040, or by e-mail to FGC@dfg.ca.gov, but must be received no later than August 27, 2004, at the hearing in Morro Bay, CA. All written comments must include the true name and mailing address of the commentor.

The regulations as proposed in strikeout-underline format, as well as an initial statement of reasons, including environmental considerations and all information upon which the proposal is based (rulemaking file), are on file and available for public review from the agency representative, Robert R. Treanor, Executive Director, Fish and Game Commission, 1416 Ninth Street, Box 944209, Sacramento, California 94244-2090, phone (916) 653-4899. Please direct requests for the above mentioned documents and inquiries concerning the regulatory process to Robert R. Treanor or Sherrie Koell at the preceding address or phone number. **Ed Pert, Chief, Fisheries Programs Branch, Department of Fish and Game, phone, (916) 445-3616, has been designated to respond to questions on the substance of the proposed regulations.** Copies of the Initial Statement of Reasons, including the regulatory language, may be obtained from the address above. Notice of the proposed action shall be posted on the Fish and Game Commission website at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/fg_comm/.

Availability of Modified Text

If the regulations adopted by the Commission differ from but are sufficiently related to the action proposed, they will be available to the public for at least 15 days prior to the date of adoption. Circumstances beyond the control of the Commission (e.g., timing of Federal regulation adoption, timing of resource data collection, timelines do not allow, etc.) or changes made to be responsive to public recommendation and comments during the regulatory process may preclude full compliance with the 15-day comment period, and the Commission will exercise its powers under Section 202 of the Fish and Game Code. Regulations adopted pursuant to this section are not subject to the time periods for adoption, amendment or repeal of regulations prescribed in Sections 11343.4, 11346.4 and 11346.8 of the Government Code. Any person interested may obtain a copy of said regulations prior to the date of adoption by contacting the agency representative named herein.

If the regulatory proposal is adopted, the final statement of reasons may be obtained from the address above when it has been received from the agency program staff.

Impact of Regulatory Action

The potential for significant statewide adverse economic impacts that might result from the proposed regulatory action has been assessed, and the following initial determinations relative to the required statutory categories have been made:

- (a) Significant Statewide Adverse Economic Impact Directly Affecting Business, Including the Ability of California Businesses to Compete With Businesses in Other States:

The proposed action will not have a significant statewide adverse economic impact directly affecting business, including the ability of California businesses to compete with businesses in other states. The proposed regulation is intended to preserve angling opportunities while safeguarding fish populations, and is not expected to impact businesses associated with sport fishing.
- (b) Impact on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State, the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses, or the Expansion of Businesses in California: None.
- (c) Cost Impacts on a Representative Private Person or Business: The Commission is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with the proposed action.
- (d) Costs or Savings to State Agencies or Costs/Savings in Federal Funding to the State: None.
- (e) Nondiscretionary Costs/Savings to Local Agencies: None.
- (f) Programs Mandated on Local Agencies or School Districts: None.
- (g) Costs Imposed on any Local Agency or School District that is Required to be Reimbursed Under Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4: None.

(h) Effect on Housing Costs: None.

Effect on Small Business

It has been determined that the adoption of these regulations may affect small business.

Consideration of Alternatives

The Commission must determine that no reasonable alternative considered by the Commission, or that has otherwise been identified and brought to the attention of the Commission, would be more effective in carrying out the purpose for which the action is proposed or would be as effective and less burdensome to affected private persons than the proposed action.

FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

Dated: June 29, 2004

Robert R. Treanor
Executive Director